An Archaeological, Historical Study and Exploration of Neemuch, Madhya Pradesh

''बेटी बचाओ, बेटी पढ़ाओ''

A

Synopsis

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1. Introduction:

Neemuch is in the northwest part of Madhya Pradesh in the Malwa plateau 24,15' to 24, 35' N Long. 74,45' to 74,37'. Popularly Neemuch is also famous as the earth of Red Soil. Its area is 3939.76 km and it's consisted of 2 districts with a population of 725457. The population density of Neemuch is 1084/km2 and administratively it also has one district Panchayat, 3 Janpad panchayats, one municipality and 237 village panchayats. Neemuch is divided into 5 Tehsils, 1 Block department and 7 Revenue Circles.

Neemuch has a place from the point of view of geography and administration geography it is an immediate neighbour of Rajasthan and its touches the boundary of Mansour District also. It is a new district, and it was formed only in Independent India. Earlier during the various periods of history, it remains the administrative unit of Mewar, Gwalior, Jaora and Tonk and on 30th June 1998, it emerged as a separate district. It is well connected with the railway and the bus transport. It is located on the Ajmer Khandwa line.

Neemuch has a rich Heritage, and it needs extensive Archaeological Exploration. The personality of Neemuch can be evaluated on the basics of the existing knowledge. It can say that it has historical continuity right from the Stone Age and a good number of stone tools and rock paintings the remains of the copper age culture and the Forts and temples of the Medieval period. The evidence of Anglo- Indian architecture is also present there.

Its name Neemuch has a very interesting story, during British rule it was a NIMACH: N- North I- India M – Mounted A – Artillery C –

Cavalry H – Headquarters and if after abbreviation the N.I.M.A.C.H. Later after getting independence, it's spelling the comes to NEEMUCH. But the pronunciation of the earlier abbreviation and the present name is similar.

2. **Aims of Research**:

In the present context, even the local peoples are not aware of the past of Neemuch therefore this project has been taken to explore the archaeological sources of the region to get information about the ancient history and culture of Neemuch. It is hoped that this study will encourage others to do more research.

In and around the Neemuch district are several mounds of Pre and proto-historic sites temples, forts, and fortress and havelies etc are scattered and this rich heritage will be disappeared therefore it is need of us to document them and publish reports for the future generation.

3. Methodology

This study is only limited to prehistoric sites therefore a village-to-village survey has been done with the help of toposheets. During the survey, it has been decided to visit the probable archaeological and historical sites and the details about the sites noted and the available tools, paintings, architecture, Iconography, and other antiquities

properly collected to further study. Photography is far necessity taken by me.

4. Chapterisation Schemes

Chapter-01: Chapter one includes the introductory remark on the proposed research work in which the geographical location of the district climate and water source has been described in detail. Besides, all the possible effects did to reconstruct the history of the region In addition to these the objectives of the research have also been included in this chapter. A detailed description of the required equipment has been described in this chapter in detail.

Chapter-02

Chapter- 2 includes a description of the geography, geology, geomorphology, soil types, rainfall, and climate of the district.

Chapter-03

It includes a detailed study of previous works and the history of the region.

Chapter-04

Chapter-04 covers all the features of all the Archaeological and historical sites in the prescribed format. It's also tried by the scholar to document each feature like the name of the village in which the site is located. The nearby river, flora and fauna and the other tools.

Chapter-05

Chapter-05 includes a brief description of the study.

Geography and Geology of the region

Neemuch district, spreading over an area of about 4000.44 $km^{2,}$ lies in the northwestern part of the state of Madhya Pradesh. Before the independence of India, it was a part of the Ujjain division, M.P. Govt. declared Neemuch as a separate district as on 30th, June 1998. Earlier, it was a part of the Mandsaur district. Three tehsils of the undivided Mandsaur district fall under this new district namely Neemuch, Jawad and Manasa. The district is bounded by Mandsaur district on the southeast and Rajasthan state on the northeast. The district lies between North latitude 24º14' and 25º02' and East longitude 74º44' and 75º33', falling in a **survey** of India part of toposheet No. 45L\13,14,15 and 45P\1,2,3,6 & 7. As per the 2011 census the population of neemuch district is about 8,26,067 for administrative purposes the district is divided into 3 tehsils and 3 blocks. It has only one city (i.e., district Hqr. Neemuch) two towns (Manasa & Jawad) and 678 Villages.

Rainfall & Climate

The climate of the Neemuch district is generally dry except during the southwest monsoon season. The year can be divided into 4 years seasons. The winter commences in the middle of November and last till the end of February. The period from March to about the first week of June is the summer season. May is the hottest month of the year. The southwest monsoon starts in the middle of June and last till the end of September. October and the middle of November constitute the post-monsoon or retreating monsoon season. The normal annual rainfall of the Neemuch district is 797.96 mm.

The normal maximum temperature received during May is 39.80 C and the minimum is 9.8C. the normal daily mean monthly maximum temperature is 31.6 C and the daily mean minimum temperature is 19C. Summer is the driest period of the year. The relative humidity generally exceeds 87% in August and the annual wind velocity of the district is 9.2km\h.

Geomorphology, Rivers & Soil Types

Neemuch district from the part of Malwa plateau. It can broadly be divided into two physical divisions. The northern plateau consists of Vindhyan rocks and the southern Malwa plateau. Under trap with gently sloping topography. Its highest elevation of 573m.asml in the district is recorded at the north-western corner of the district in Jawad Tehsil comprising of upper Vindhyan rock. The lowest elevation in the district is recorded at about 410m. amsl located near village fatwas in neemuch block occupied by Basaltic rock.

Rivers

Most entire district is falling under the Chambal sub-basin area of the Ganga basin. A very small area to the southwestern of Jiran in neemuch block flow into Jakam a tributary of Mahi and drain into the Arabian Sea. The Retam, Ider, Erda, Rupa, Gangali and Rajouri are the main tributaries of the Chambal River, and all are following either an east or northwest direction Gambhari River follows north of the Chambal town is only westerly flowing river.

Soil Types

The district is generally covered with black cotton soil covering almost three fourth of the area. This part is occupied by Deccan basalts. The rest part has red-yellow mixed soils derived from sandstone, shale and gneiss. The alluvial soil is found along the river courses. The higher elevation i.e., the hilly regions have a cover of the museum. Which is made up of small, rounded pieces of weathered basalt. The Vindhyan and bijawars have a thin cover of sandy loams. The alluvial is derived from hill slopes by numerous sterns and watercourses.

Flora & Fauna

Many types of wild animals and birds are found in the neemuch district. For example Leopard (Panthera Tigris), Bear (Ursidae), Blue cow (Boselaphus Tragocamelus), Indian Gazella (GazellaBennettii), Wild Boar (Mouping pig), Wild Dog (Lycaon pictus), Fox (Vulpes vulpes), Wild cat (Felis silvestris), Jackal (Canis Avreus), Baboon (Semnopithecus), Peacock (Pavo cristatus), Crocodile (Crocodylinae), Rabbit (Oryctolagus cuniculus), Lesser (Sypheotides indices), Cow (Bos taurus), Buffalo (Bubalus bubalis), Deer (Cervidae), Goat (Capra aegagrus hirus), Sheep (Quis aries), Squirrel (Scivridae), Parrot (Psittaciformes), Elephant (Loxodonta), Cat (Felis catus), Bat (Chiroptera), Titody (Vandlus indices), Nightingale (Pycnonotidia)

5. Previous Work and History of the Region

Though, Neemuch is an important district of Madhya Pradesh, and it has played a major role in the freedom struggle of India. When the Indian sepoys revolted against the British army, it had become difficult for Resident to control it. Therefore, a major crisis developed and further, Neemuch had come into the eyes of British officers.

Geographical Neemuch in the North-West Malwa plateau and it had a natural cultural and political relationship with the Mewar or South-east Rajasthan, but Padma Shree Wakankar was the first Professional archaeologist who recognized the archaeological importance of the district by his tedious affords. He discovered the Acheulian clever and discoid in the Retam Valley of the district. Besides a hand axe and a well-painted discoid of quarts along with many fluted cores and flakes were identified by the explorer Padma Shri Wakankar in the north or south slop of the Retam valley.

(Indian Archaeology Review 1956-57; p.78)

After this first discovery of Wakanker which was made in 1956-57, C.P. Trivedi of the Archaeological Survey of India discovered early stone age tools consisting of handaxe, clever, all-in quartzite at Rampura in1965-66. During his survey, he also noticed an implementiferous cemented gravel.

(Indian Archaeology Review 1965-66; p.81)

In the continuation of its Padam shri, V.S. Wakankar discovered pebbles and Acheulian tools in the neighbourhood of Jawad on the bank of Gambhiri and its Tributary nala. (Indian archaeology review 1968-69; p.65) later in 1969-70 Wakanker extensively explore the Mandsour District and he found

evidence of the early stone age at Rampura. Fortunately, at this village large number of stone tools were collected by him. These stone tools were also on the surface of the cemented gravel. These pebble's tools were unifacial and bifacial. It is very interesting to narrate that the cement was found to be resting over the sandstone of the Vindhyan series.
(Indian archaeology review 1969-70 p.16)
During my Post Graduate studies, when I took an interest in the Neemuch district because it is my hometown and I explore the region. During the two seasons of 2019-2021, I found a few stone age sites of the Palaeolithic age. I observed that the district needs an extensive survey of the region to evaluate the Archaeological personality of the district.

Panch Deval temple is in the Jiran tehsil of Neemuch district in Madhya Pradesh. Panch Deval temple was built by a Guhil ruler in the 9^{th} – 10^{th} century. This temple is made of sandstone, and it's dedicated to Lord Shiva. An ancient Chaturmukhi Shivling is installed in the Garbhgraha of the temple and the Garud statue of the Parmar era in the temple's Sabhamandapa is in the human incarnation. This temple was the major site of occultist sects. I have written in detail about the Panch Deval temple's Art, Architecture, Iconography, and Inscriptions.

Pt. Shiv Narayan Gour: (Jaju Smriti Granth 1988)

Mr Vinay Shrivastav: (□□□□□ □□ □□□□□□□□ □□□□□, □□□□: □□□□□□ □□□ □□□□ □□□□□□□□; 2008)

Pt. Motilal Sharma: (□□□□ □□□□ □□□□□; 2011)

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Dr Manohar Singh Ranawat: (Munhot Nainsi Ki Khayat)

Mr Vinay Shrivastav: (□□□□: □□□□□□ □□□ □□□□ □□□□□□□; 2008)

Newly Discovered Sites

Ramjhar:

Ramjhar is located on the bank of a rivulet. There is the medieval temple of Mahadev on the bank of the rivulet. On the Jiran tehsil of Neemuch district. The GPS coordinates for the site are 24º18’28” N 74º50’52” E. The site is situated on various mounds scattered on the surface of the sites. The elevation of the mounds is between 1m. to 2m. approximately. Roughly the site has spread over an area of 5km. the shrubs are on the surface of the mounds or also on the mound. It is a late Acheulian site and during the survey, I found Hand axes, scrapers, Hammer stones, Tortoise cores, Flake tools, and Cleavers. All these tools are made of quartz and the Levolves technique has been applied to the making of the tools. The soil is of laterite type, and it was noticed that the residual part of laterite to is also stuck on the tools.

Rampura:

Rampura is located on the catchment area of the Chambal River in the Rampura tehsil of Neemuch district. The GPS coordinates of the site are 24º28’21” N 75º26’21” E. The existing Chambal River is which flow in the village Rampura is not a natural stream and a few years ago it was the construction of the Gandhi Sagar dam. During the survey, it was observed

that the site has been spread over the surface of the village and it appears that the modern village Rampura is located on the stone age mound. The tortoise core, scrappers, Handaxes, cleverer. Some of the retouched exist on the surface. Likewise, the Ramjhar soil is laterite type, and the granules of the soil are also stuck on the surface of the tools. The tools are made of quartzite and quartz and probably flaking has been used commonly in this region.

Dalpatpura:

Another site is Dalpatpura which is located on the tehsil Jiran near the roadside. Which connects the Chitakheda to Jiran road GPS coordinates of the site are 24º18’47” N 74º51’00.71” E. It is divided into 2 parts on both sides of the road. It appears that during the road construction, it has divided artificially all available tools are made of quartz all the tools are from the late Acheulian or the Lower Palaeolithic age. Besides, cleavers, scrapers, and points are also recovered from the site.

Danderi

The Danderi site is located on the bank of the river Danderi. This site is situated 4 to 5 km away from the Manasa tehsil of the Neemuch district. The GPS coordinates of the site are 24º28’54” N 75º12’34” N. There is a medieval Charbujanath temple and 2 step wells on the site. This site is on a mound. And the tools are recovered from the slop on the mound. These are U shape Clever, tortoise Core, and some other cores that are also recovered from the site.

During my 2 years of exploration, I could explore 5 tehsils of the Neemuch District. In my exploration, I discovered some prehistoric, protohistoric,

early historic, early medieval, and medieval sites.

Conclusion

I have selected my Ph.D research work on “An Archaeological and Historical study and Exploration of Neemuch, Madhya Pradesh” to explore the region and also to evaluated the personality of Neemuch in Madhya Pradesh in particular in India in general. The major work on the Archaeology and history of Neemuch was performed by Padamshri V.S. Wakanker and later Archaeological survey of India have surveyed the region and report the new sites from Palaeolithic to historical the existing knowledge of archaeology and history of the region is enough to justify my research purposel.

I would like to submit my Opinion that my research will be based on field visit. Therefor, it will be a first kind of study and will also the original work on the region.

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